

N A T U R A L

R E S O U R C E S

TAHUYA STATE FOREST OFF-ROAD VEHICLE (ORV)

**Recreational
Facilities Plan**
December 2008



WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF
Natural Resources
Caring for your natural resources... now and forever



Acknowledgments

The Tahuya State Forest ORV Recreational Facilities Plan was created through a planning process bringing together users neighbors, interest groups, citizens, and DNR staff. The following individuals contributed to the development of this document.

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Tahuya State Forest ORV Recreational Facilities Plan

The Tahuya State Forest provides multiple benefits to Washington State—revenue for the beneficiaries, habitat for many species of wildlife, local economic vitality, and opportunities for public access and recreation. This unique landscape is one of the most popular off-road vehicle (ORV) destinations in Washington.

The *Tahuya State Forest Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) Recreational Facilities Plan* will allow land managers to more effectively manage ORV recreation by strategically locating facilities away from congested areas and ensure recreation uses are compatible with financial and environmental obligations of the trust. This plan lays the groundwork for the comprehensive development of motorized recreation in the Tahuya State Forest over the next 10 years. The goal is to consider visitor safety, impacts to resources, costs to maintain facilities, and recreation use patterns when expanding an existing facility or developing a new facility.

Completion of the *Tahuya State Forest Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) Recreational Facilities Plan* is the culmination of several years of hard work by a citizen advisory group, local user groups, the public and the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Most of the management recommendations within this plan are contingent upon receiving funding from outside the agency. It is through the collaborative partnerships with volunteers, stakeholders groups, funding organization and others that ensures the sound recreation management of this forest will continue well beyond the life of this plan.

Thank you to everyone who helped work on this plan for your time and effort. We encourage you to stay involved and work with DNR staff to create a legacy of exemplary recreation stewardship as this plan is carried out over the next decade.



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Executive Summary

The Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) manages the 23,000-acre Tahuya State Forest in Mason County. The forest is located within Hood Canal on the Tahuya Peninsula near Belfair and lies within the DNR's South Puget Sound Region.

Tahuya State Forest is a working forest, managed for timber production, wildlife habitat and recreation. Recreation and public access opportunities must be compatible with overall forest and trust management objectives to be allowed within the forest landscape.

In 2003, DNR received a Non-highway and Off-road Vehicles (NOVA) grant from the Recreation Committee for Outdoor Recreation (formerly Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation) to develop an *Off-road Vehicle (ORV) Recreation Facilities Management Plan* for Tahuya State Forest. The purpose of the planning effort is to:

- Evaluate current recreation use of present facilities.
- Provide direction for a desired future as it relates to recreation facilities.
- Guide the wise use of limited resources as it relates to facilities and attached trail system.

The planning process, conducted from June 2003 through November 2006, included DNR staff, private consultants and a planning subcommittee from the Tahuya Focus Group. The planning working group was made up of seven individuals who represented various recreation types of use. The planning group worked with DNR staff and private consultants to develop guidelines for facility design, concepts drawings and trail management objectives outlined in Part II. The plan is divided into three parts:

Part I: Background

Part II: Recreation Management Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

Part III: Facilities Overview and Plan Implementation

Part I: Background

The Tahuya State Forest is a working forest managed by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources. The department, by law has a responsibility as manager of the land to produce revenue for trust beneficiaries, such as counties, while protecting natural resources. DNR must balance this responsibility with the public interest, which includes providing recreational opportunities.

Each year, more than 150,000 motorized and 50,000 non-motorized recreationists visit Tahuya State Forest to ride the 170 miles of trails.

The Tahuya State Forest is primarily a destination area for ORV trail riding. Each year, more than 150,000 motorized and 50,000 non-motorized recreationists visit the forest to ride the 170 miles of trails. Examples of non-motorized recreational uses include fishing, hunting, mountain biking, horseback riding, firewood gathering, hiking and recreational mushroom harvesting.

This region has seen an increase in population and urban-related impacts, which puts pressure on the department to provide more recreational opportunities. Demand for public access is also heightened as many nearby private landowners restrict public access to their land.

Part II: Recreation Management Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

The Tahuya State Forest ORV Recreation Facility Plan outlines the type of ORV use, general location and/or intensity of recreation uses to manage the forest for the next 10 years. The decisions in this plan are guided by DNR's Policy for Sustainable Forestry and will also be guided by the South Puget Forest Land Plan. More specifically, this plan is intended to guide the recreation management for ORV use within the Belfair Planning Unit's Tahuya State Forest Block by concentrating on:

- Access Concerns
 - Locating ORV recreation facilities away from congested areas.
 - Strengthening trail circulation around existing facilities.
 - Determine the capacity of facilities.
 - Providing ORV “first year/first gear” areas to redirect beginner use and pit riders from parking lot.
- ORV facility development and design guidelines
 - Locate facilities near road with a host site.
 - Establish a border around perimeter of the facility.
 - Direct visitors with designated paved parking spots, kiosks and signage.
 - Allow the ability to close facility with entrance and trail gates.
 - Provide ADA parking, a unisex toilet, and trail information board at facility entrance.
 - Utilize first year/first gear (beginner riding/warm-up) areas as a way to focus non-trail related ORV use.
- Centralizing ORV campground development
 - Consolidate ORV overnight camping.
 - Redirect ORV camping from four locations to one central location.
 - Reduce environmental impacts by eliminating informal camping at the staging area(s).

Public participation was an integral part of creating this plan.

Public participation during the planning process was an integral part of creating this plan. Public outreach methods included:

- Information gathering from the Tahuya Focus Group.
- Formation of the Tahuya Planning Subcommittee, June 2003 – November 2006.
- Distribution of more than 1,000 recreation user surveys.
- Public meetings (two) advertised in the *Mason County Journal*.

Part III: Facilities Overview and Plan Implementation

This plan examines existing ORV facilities and outlines proposed new ORV facilities, which includes four ORV trailheads and an ORV campground. The plan calls for a 10-year schedule to develop ORV facilities and ORV trail access points from existing ORV facilities.

Additional Information

Additional information is included in the appendices.



Preface

The Tahuya State Forest ORV Recreational Facilities Plan is intended to guide the Washington State Department of Natural Resources in the development and management of ORV recreation facilities within the Tahuya State Forest for the next ten years. ORV facility plan progress and results will be periodically assessed and adjustments will be made as needed. Implementation depends on establishing a secure funding source for construction, maintenance and education and enforcement (E&E).

This plan outlines current ORV access issues, provides ORV facility design guidelines, concept drawings, and a proposed implementation strategy to guide ORV use on the Tahuya State Forest over the next ten years. The plan will support future Recreation Conservation Office (RCO) grant requests.

Public involvement in this plan included:

- A public survey.
- Public meetings.
- Formation of a planning working group.
- Solicitation of comments on the plan.



Introduction

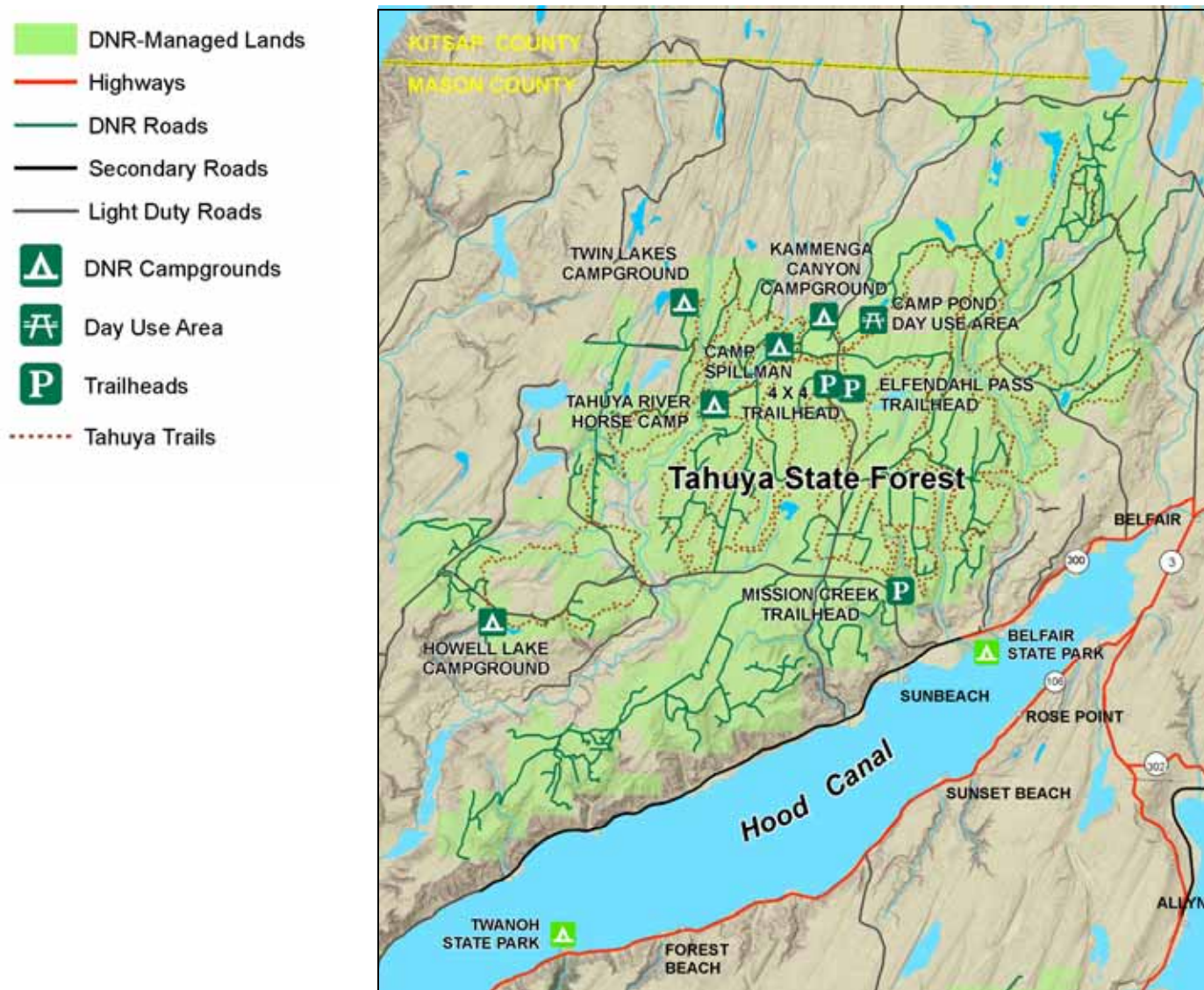
Tahuya State Forest is located on the southeastern portion of the Hood Canal/Olympic Peninsula area near Belfair. (Figure 1, following page) It is a working forest that continues to be a popular multiple-use recreation area where people work and play outdoors. The lands of Tahuya State Forest are forested state trust lands. These lands generate revenue through harvest of timber and other forest products to help fund Mason County services and to help fund public schools and other institutions statewide.

Tahuya State Forest encompasses 23,000 acres and is a year-round multiple-use recreational destination in western Washington. Visitors enjoy off-road vehicle use, such as dirt bike, all-terrain vehicles and 4x4 riding along with non-motorized activities such as horseback riding, mountain biking, fishing and hunting, among other recreation uses. The Tahuya State Forest has become a destination for an estimated 200,000 recreation enthusiasts each year.

Tahuya State Forest is part of the legacy of public lands managed by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR). DNR manages more than five million acres of state-owned forest, aquatic, agricultural, conservation and commercial lands for long-term benefits to current and future trust beneficiaries and the people of Washington. The mission of the department is to:

- Provide professional, forward-looking stewardship of state lands, natural resources, and the environment.
- Provide leadership in creating a sustainable future for the trusts and all citizens.

Figure 1. Tahuya Recreation planning area



Disclaimer:

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this map. However, due to changes in ownership and agency modification of data layers, plus the need to rely on data from outside the agency, the Department of Natural Resources cannot accept responsibility for errors or omissions. Therefore, there are no warranties which accompany this material.

January 2009



WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF
Natural Resources
Peter Goldmark - Commissioner of Public Lands



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A Working Forest

DNR manages more than 2.1 million acres of upland state trust lands. These lands provide working landscapes, healthy ecosystems and public benefits. Public benefits include scientific research, wildlife habitat, water-quality protection and access for public recreation.

Across the landscape, DNR works to provide a balance of benefits that sustains the state's social, economic, and ecological needs. In managing Tahuya State Forest, DNR works to:

- Responsibly and sustainably harvest timber and other natural resources to provide revenue for the trust beneficiaries, as mandated by law.
- Protect the long-term health of the forest's ecosystems, including wildlife and water quality.
- Provide social benefits, such as recreational and educational opportunities to the public.

Authority: Rules, Policies and Plans

Since 1971, **The Multiple Use Act** (Chapter 79.10.100 RCW) directs DNR to allow multiple use, such as recreation areas, trails, hunting, fishing, etc., on trust uplands. The multiple use must be consistent with the applicable trust provisions and in the best interests of the state and the general welfare of the citizens.

The Policy for Sustainable Forests (PSF) adopted in June 2006 directs the department to conserve and enhance the natural systems and resources of forested state trust lands managed by the department to produce long-term, sustainable income, and environmental and other benefits through department policies.

A Forest Land Plan is a comprehensive plan designed to translate outcomes established by state and federal law and implement Board of Natural Resources policy. Forestland planning provides documentation of forest management strategies and demonstrates where and what types of activities meet the desired outcomes expressed by the board. This plan will be consistent with the recreational strategies of the South Puget Forest Land Plan.

The Habitat Conservation Plan is a long-term land management plan authorized under the Endangered Species Act to conserve threatened and endangered species. For DNR, it means a plan for state trust lands that allows timber harvesting and other management activities to continue while providing for species conservation as described in the Endangered Species Act. Section 10 of the Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. 1539)

DNR recognizes the diverse interests and values of the recreating public and the importance of connecting people with Washington's landscapes.

DNR Recreation Vision

Washington State Department of Natural Resources recognizes the diverse interests and values of the recreating public and the importance of connecting people with Washington's landscapes. DNR's vision statement for Recreation and Public Access is to "manage public and trust lands in a manner that provides quality, safe recreational experiences that are sustainable and consistent with DNR's environmental, financial and social responsibilities."

Sustainable Recreation Management

The following points represent the best practices for managing recreation in Tahuya State Forest in a manner that is sustainable:

- **Emphasize good management and fiscal responsibility** by making the most effective use of limited resources, evaluating maintenance and operation projects, and guarding against unrealistic expectations.
- **Achieve objectives through active management** of existing recreational use and future growth by monitoring use patterns, congestion and overcrowding at facilities and trail linkages.
- Engage local communities in stewardship activities by working with community organizations to build a **network of support and opportunity** in the forest and surrounding area.
- **Increase public awareness of trust principles** related to forest and recreation management by making the trust principles visible to the public through informational signage and other media.
- **Pursue long-term, stable funding** to provide ongoing recreation program support, facility maintenance, and funding for enforcement and education.

Statewide Recreation Role

Across the state, DNR's recreation program maintains and operates 143 recreation sites and more than 1,100 miles of trail—some are designated for only motorized or non-motorized use, many are multiple use, including mountain biking, horseback riding, hiking, and ORVs¹. Forest roads on trust lands provide access to designated² sites and also provide access for dispersed recreation,³ including hunting, fishing, sightseeing, berry and mushroom picking, etc.

DNR's recreation facilities⁴ complement those offered by other agencies across the state. These include federal agencies such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and National Park Service; state agencies, such as the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and Washington State Parks; and quasi-public land managers, such as Tacoma Power and Light. DNR lands are filling niches that many other recreation providers do not provide. Many of these agencies offer facilities that require fees or take reservations. In contrast, DNR's recreation facilities are typically on a first-come, first-served, no-fee basis.⁵

¹ ORV stands for off-road vehicle. Types of ORVs include motorcycles, all terrain vehicles (ATVs), and four-wheel drive (4x4) vehicles. A place supports ORV use if it allows any, but not necessarily all, of these types of vehicles.

² Designated Trails are those trails that are maintained, managed, or have been approved by DNR for recreation use.

³ Dispersed recreation means recreation that occurs on department-managed lands outside of a developed recreation facility.

In the SPS Region any advertised event and any event that charges an entry fee requires a permit.

⁴ DNR's recreation facilities include the designated trails, trailheads, campgrounds and other sites as well as their accompanying amenities, such as signage and restrooms.

⁵ In the South Puget Sound Region, at the Tahuya River Horse Camp, group camping areas are accessed via the region's reservation process. All advertised events and any event that charges an entry fee requires a land use license (permit).

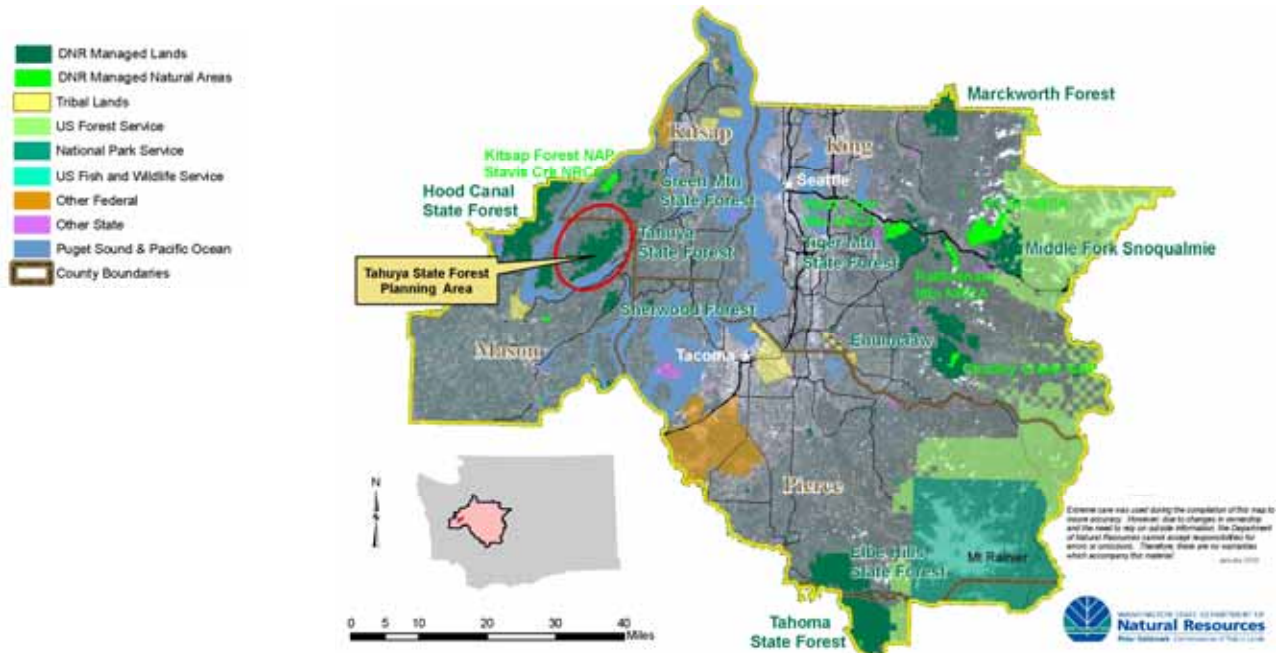
South Puget Sound Region and Recreation

DNR's South Puget Sound (SPS) Region (Figure 2) is one of six regions with responsibility to manage state trust lands in Washington State.

SPS Region manages about 206,000 acres of trust forestland and regulates forest practices on approximately 1 million acres of state and private forestland. The region manages 17,100 acres of conservation land. DNR's Shoreline District manages aquatic lands within the region, such as state-owned tidelands and bedlands.

The most pronounced characteristic of this region is urban growth, with more than half of the state's population residing within its boundaries. Levels of use have increased over time and are expected to continue to rise. In the South Puget Sound Region, more than 1.8 million people live near state lands. The region includes all of Kitsap, King, Pierce and Mason Counties and a small portion of eastern Lewis, Snohomish and Thurston Counties. The region office is located in Enumclaw.

Figure 2. South Puget Sound Region Map



The South Puget Sound Region (SPS) manages recreation within various types of urban, rural and remote areas. Popular recreation forest blocks in SPS Region include Tahuya, Green Mountain, Tiger Mountain and Elbe State Forest. Dispersed recreation occurs throughout the region, but occurs most in the western and southern portions of the region including Mason, Kitsap and Pierce Counties.

SPS developed recreation amenities are listed below:

- 14 Trailheads
- 8 Campgrounds
- 2 Vista Points
- 2 Day-use Sites
- 4 Ski Huts
- 12 Trail Systems
- 198.5 miles of multiple use trails
- 101.5 non-motorized trails
- 57 miles of hiker only trails
- 100 miles of winter ski trails

Tahuya State Forest borders Kitsap County to the north and abuts Hood Canal to the south. Within the forest, the following developed recreation facilities and trails exist:

- Three day-use sites: Mission Creek, Elfendahl Pass, and Howell Lake
- Four campgrounds: Camp Spillman, Tahuya River Horse Camp, Twin Lake Camp, and Kammenga Campground
- More than 170 miles of trails, consisting of:
 - approximately 90 miles of single-track trails
 - approximately 80 miles of two-track trails that include 14 miles of 4x4 trails

Tahuya Forest Recreation Planning Efforts

The *Tahuya Recreation Plan* (1992), developed as a supplement to the 1991 *Tahuya State Forest Management Plan*, outlined goals and objectives for public use and recreation, as well as a detailed capital action plan. Recreation on DNR lands in the South Puget Sound Region is generally described in the *South Puget Sound Region Recreation Inventory and Assessment* (2005).

The **Tahuya Focus Group**, a group of local people representing different recreation activities meets monthly. In existence for more than 13 years, the focus group provides advisory oversight and recommendations regarding volunteer trail maintenance, organized event scheduling, and trail reroutes. The focus group also recommends changes to management of campgrounds and trailheads as recreation use changes or new trends develop. Volunteers donate thousands of hours each year to assist DNR in maintaining the trails and facilities in Tahuya State Forest.

Use of the Plan

This ORV facility plan is intended to guide DNR in developing and managing ORV recreation facilities and access within the Belfair Planning Unit of the main Tahuya State Forest Block. The west block of the Tahuya State Forest and Green Mountain State Forest are located in proximity to the main block but are not included in the planning area. The use of the Tahuya State Forest ORV Recreation Facilities Plan is intended to:

- Provide a 10-year plan for ORV recreation facilities by proposing built structures that promote greater on-the-ground operations efficiency and effectiveness.
- Provide an ORV facility capacity level to guide renovation and improvements to ORV facilities, including parking accommodations over the next 10 years.
- Establish management priorities to guide the wise use of limited resources.



Part I: Background

Project Description

DNR applies for Nonhighway Off-Road Vehicle Account (NOVA) grants each year to help fund recreation maintenance and developments, education and enforcement. The department must compete on a project-by-project basis against other state, federal agencies, and county agencies. To compete successfully for grants, DNR must be able to provide matching funds and the staff resources to apply for and implement each grant. The following is the grant description for Tahuya ORV:

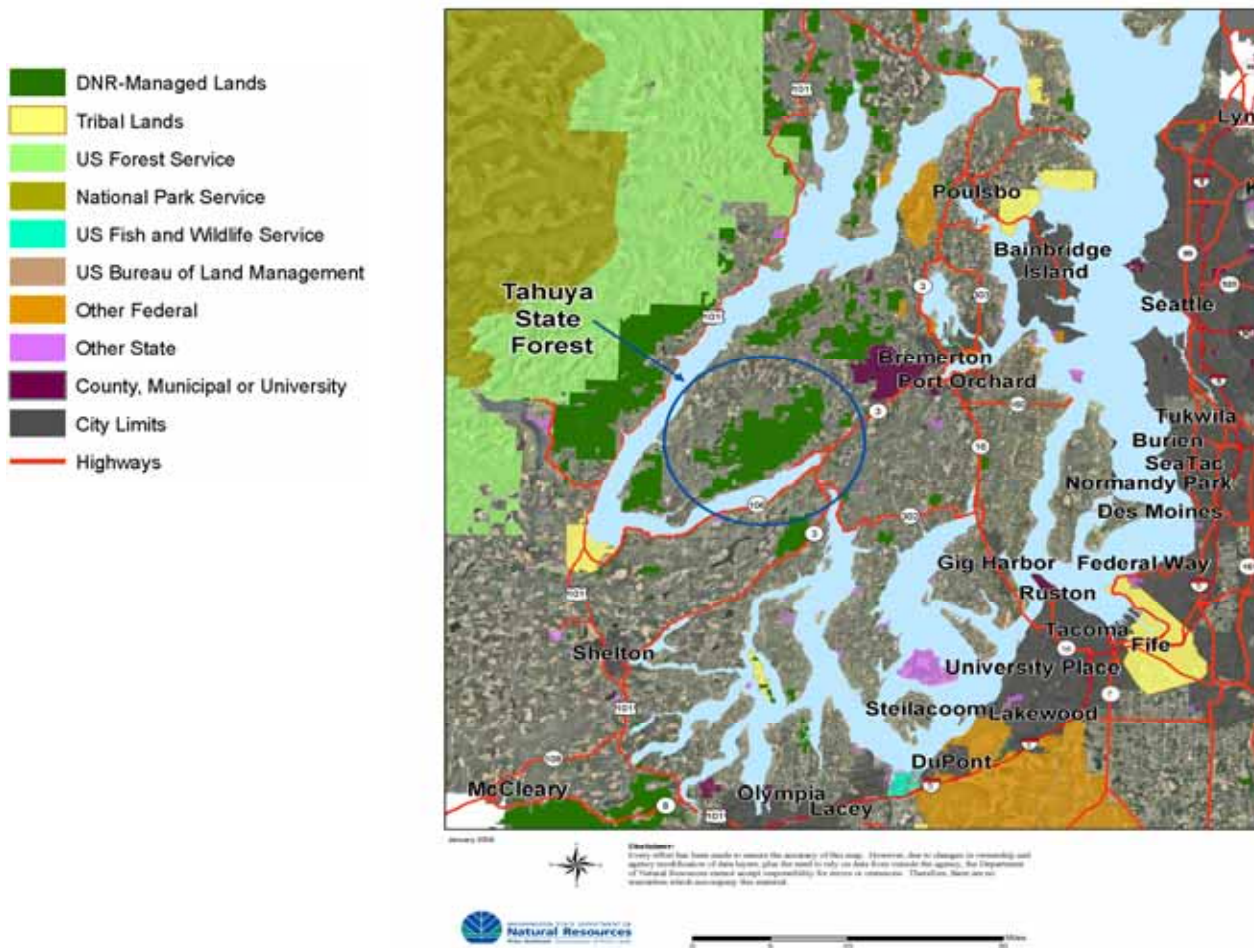
“This ORV planning project will finalize needed direction to solve access issues, overuse dispersal and consolidation in balance with the carrying capacity for the Tahuya State Forest. Other outcomes include: determining trailhead relocation sites for consolidation, design of the new trailhead(s) and/or rehabilitation design of existing trailheads, State Environmental Policy Act preparation, and access phasing plan. DNR has been working extensively with local user groups in preparation for final decision making that this project will provide. ORV enthusiasts are looking forward to a solid plan to help provide a safe and enjoyable area to recreate.”

This project concentrates on addressing congestion and overcrowding issues by establishing facility capacities for off-road vehicles (i.e. motorcycle, ATV and 4x4 riding) at developed recreation facilities in the forest. In addition, illegal activities affect Tahuya State Forest, such as garbage dumping and vandalism that are outside of the scope of this project.

Service Area

The intended service area for Tahuya State Forest includes most of Mason County and parts of Pierce, King, Kitsap, Clallam, Jefferson and Grays Harbor counties. (Figure 3) This is defined as the service area because the majority of current visitors originate from these counties.

Figure 3. Tahuya Forest service area



Adopting a recreation plan offers the best opportunity for DNR to meet its land management obligations while achieving multiple-use objectives.

Inventory and Assessment

Facilities and Opportunities Available (Supply)

A variety of general outdoor recreation facilities and approximately 170 miles of recreation trails occur within the forest. The facilities include:

Table 1. Tahuya Forest recreation facilities

Name	Major Activities
Howell Lake	Day use
Mission Creek	Day use
Elfendahl Pass	Day use
Camp Spillman	Camping (10 sites)
Tahuya River Horse Camp	Camping (10 reservation only sites)
Twin Lakes Campground	Camping (6 walk-in sites)
Kammenga Canyon Campground	Camping (6 sites)

Demonstrated Need (Demand)

Providing designated and managed recreation opportunities on DNR lands is an important part of meeting the demand of residents in this service area. In Tahuya State Forest, ORV riders have many recreation opportunities. In the service area, DNR lands represent a major public ORV riding opportunity. Other jurisdictions in the service area offer similar riding opportunities including Elbe Hills in Pierce County and Evan Creek on USFS land in Snohomish County. Also in the service area is Stradleline ORV Park operated by Grays Harbor County. Stradleline ORV Parks offers a distinct niche and a different type of ORV recreation experience than the Tahuya State Forest.

Adopting a recreation plan meets the requirements of state law (Chapter 79.10.120 RCW), while it also helps to gain the support of recreation visitors in maintaining the area. This support will also lend itself to gaining potential grant funding, which helps staff education and enforcement personnel and provide maintenance. Adopting a recreation plan offers the best opportunity for DNR to meet its land management obligations while achieving multiple-use objectives.

Many recreation visitors to the forest have identified congestion at facilities and overcrowded trails as an area of concern. Overuse coupled with limited ORV riding opportunities in the service area has begun to limit trail riders' experience. To address these issues, this plan outlines the carrying capacity of the ORV recreation facility as it relates to the total trail riders per mile of trail and the amount of parking each facility needs to meet those riders parking needs. The proposed outcome will improve the quality at ORV recreation facilities by developing recreation management objectives that address concerns about access, meet the demands for developed ORV facilities, and improve camping.

Motorized recreation use in the forest continues to rise each year. Below are the specific issues associated with the ever-increasing amount of use in the forest:

- **Existing ORV facilities are overcrowded.** The amount of motorized use increases each year. From 1999-2001, ORV tabs increased by 25 percent Western Washington. This increase shows up in Tahuya as the number ORV riders increase each year.
- **Concentration of parking occurs outside of designated ORV trailheads.** Sandhill Gravel Pit has 40 to 60 vehicles a day on some weekends. Parking at Camp Pond is a pull-over off the roadside. Typically, 20 to 30 vehicles park there each day on weekends.
- **Overflow parking problems.** Typically, ORV staging areas become full and parking occurs off of nearby forest and county roads. This off-site parking creates safety concerns and leads to resource damage near these informal parking areas.
- **Lack of basic sanitation.** Sandhill Gravel Pit (an unofficial trailhead), Camp Pond (unofficial trailhead and play area) and the Mission Creek Trailhead do not have toilet facilities.
- **Large organized ORV events continue to occur and displace other forest users.** Organized ORV events often range in size from 350 to 400 participants and occur throughout the early spring and summer. On average each year, 10 large trail-related events occur in the forest. Five of these events regularly have more than 300 motorized participants. DNR limits the number of riders to no more than 400 riders for each event, a result of the Tahuya Focus Group's recommendations in 2002.

Existing Environment

DNR manages the forestland for revenue production. Consistent with state law (Multiple Use Act), DNR allows compatible recreation use of state trust lands. Offering recreation opportunities on Tahuya State Forest is consistent with DNR's authority to construct, operate and maintain primitive outdoor recreation facilities under Chapter 79.10.140 RCW.

The average timber harvest cycle is 60 to 70 years in length. Timber production occurs in Tahuya's 23,000 acres. The primary forest species is Douglas fir and other types of trees include white pine, western red cedar, hemlock, and lodge pole pine. Specialized forest products that are commercially harvested from the forest include salal, evergreen, bow and huckleberry. Additional specialized forest products more commonly gathered for recreational and/or tribal purposes include bear grass, bracken fern, various mushrooms and berries that grow in the natural forest understory.

The Tahuya State Forest provides habitat for a diversity of birds and other wildlife. Since 1994, DNR has worked closely with the Hood Canal Salmon Enhancement Group to replace and enhance culverts where there were

stream gradients or downstream fish blockages. Salmon and trout species live in the tributaries located in the planning area. Trails adjacent to streams have been closed or rerouted away from the streams.

Tahuya State Forest is in Mason County, which is known for its recreational areas, including Lake Cushman, Olympic National Park, Hood Canal Beaches, and the Skokomish River. It is estimated that the county's population during the summer weekends doubles in size from 50,000 to 100,000.

Mason County is the second fastest growing county in the state, with a growth rate of 19.62 percent since the 1990 Census. Most population growth takes place in rural, unincorporated areas of the county, such as Belfair and the lake developments. The county is considered a bedroom community with many residents commuting to Bremerton, Olympia, Tacoma and Seattle. The county also attracts a number of retirees.

Minutes from Tahuya State Forest is the town of Belfair, located on State Route 3 midway between Bremerton and Shelton. Touted as the "Gateway to Hood Canal," Belfair is the home of the Theler Wetland Center. Last year, more than 150,000 visitors recreated on the wetland's 4-mile trail system. Visitors and residents of the area enjoy boating, fishing, swimming and water sports of all kinds on both the north and south shores of Hood Canal and Puget Sound, at any of the over 200 freshwater lakes in the area and along the miles of rivers, streams and creeks. There are several local lakes with public access boat launching. Many of these freshwater lakes are well-stocked seasonally with a variety of fish including rainbow trout, cutthroat, kokanee, brook trout, bass and perch. During mid-summer and early fall, the salmon begin their seasonal migration home to spawn in several Mason County rivers.

Public Involvement

Public involvement was instrumental in developing this plan and included the formation of a small planning working group, solicitation of comments from the Tahuya Focus Group, public workshops, and a recreation user survey; in addition, DNR staff, conducted numerous site visits with consultants and individual focus group members who use the facilities with various forms of ORV recreational vehicles.

Summary of Methods Used

The public outreach process had four main components: the planning working group, the Tahuya Focus Group, public workshops and a recreation survey.

Planning Working Group

A public meeting on June 21, 2004, initiated the Tahuya State Forest public involvement process. A seven-member Tahuya State Forest Planning Group was formed from interested parties of the Tahuya Focus Group and the members represented the different types of recreation

The strength of the focus group is its ability to listen to the different points of view and try to find solutions that best work for the overall management of Tahuya.

activities occurring in the forest. The planning team met periodically from May 2004 through November 2006. The members provided substantial feedback to consultants and staff during the development of this plan.

Tahuya Focus Group

The Tahuya Focus Group was formed in 1994. This group has worked with DNR for 13 years, providing information about existing recreation in the forest and discussing how to find an appropriate balance among various interests, including alternative ways to manage compatible recreation use.

The Tahuya Focus Group is a diverse group made up of representatives from relevant types of recreation interests, neighbors and wildlife managers. The representation on the focus group remains broad. The focus group representation throughout the years has included the following recreation types: motorcycle, all-terrain vehicles, 4x4 vehicles, equestrian, mountain biker, hiker, fishing and hunting and other recreation interests, as well as concerned citizens.

The focus group meetings provide a forum for understanding the various interests throughout the forest, and the nature of each group's needs and concerns. While meetings have specific working agendas, the focus group meetings are open to the public and allow public comment. The strength of the focus group is its ability to listen to the different points of view and try to find solutions that best work for the overall management of Tahuya.

Public Workshops

Public Workshops took place September 12, 2004, April 27, 2005 and July 18, 2006. The purpose of the public workshops was to report back to the general public about work to date and seek agreement on proposed actions. DNR staff notified the public of workshops through the local newspaper. Workshop attendance ranged from 25 to 30 participants, with a large number of participants representing interested user groups.

Recreation Survey

DNR conducted the Tahuya State Forest Recreation Survey on its Web site to gather information from a broader base of recreational users who visit the forest. DNR received 1116 completed survey by the deadline of December 31, 2005. This survey is not randomly sampled and is not scientifically representative of a larger population. The following information shows some of the themes that emerged from the survey results.

Survey results

The survey results were summarized into three areas:

- Information related to an individual's forest visit.
- Information related to the respondents overall impression of the forest.
- General demographic information.

The respondents answered questions related to their forest visits, including the type of recreation activities, frequency of use, time and length of visit and overnight accommodations. The following are highlights from these responses:

Percentage of recreation activity

- **Motorcycling received the most responses** of all the recreation activities with 68 percent of all the respondents checking this activity.
- **Camping is the next most common recreation activity** (46 percent), followed by ATV use (34 percent) and 4x4 riding (30 percent).

Table 2: Survey responses to type of recreation activity in Tahuya State Forest.

Activity	Number	Percent
Motorcycling	753	68 %
Camping	510	46 %
ATVing	372	34 %
4x4ing	335	30 %
Hiking	198	18 %
Mountain biking	176	16 %
Scenic driving	158	14 %
Nature Observation	147	13 %
Picnicking	144	13 %
Fishing	141	13 %
Hunting	104	9 %
Horseback riding	37	3 %
Other	30	3 %

Frequency of use

- More than 50 percent of respondents visit the forest at a minimum once a month.
- More than 40 percent visit the forest once or twice a year.

Time of visit

- Weekends are the most popular time for all users to visit the forest.
- More than 60 percent of the respondents use the forest year around.
- Fall and spring are the most popular seasons, with more than 80 percent of the respondents visiting the forest during these seasons.

Length of visit

- More than half of all the respondents (52 percent) visit the forest within a 6- to 12-hour visit.
- Twenty-five percent of respondents visit the forest within a 1- to 5-hour visit.

Overnight accommodations

- Eighty percent of those who answered this question camp in the Tahuya State Forest, with about 20 percent camping at a nearby off-site location.
- Fifteen percent who stay overnight do not camp and stay in a near by motel.

Average driving time

- Most respondents (47 percent) drive one to two hours each way to access Tahuya State Forest
- Twenty-eight percent drive from 30 to 59 minutes to visit the forest.

Next, the survey gauged respondents' overall impression of the forest by asking such questions as:

- What is your greatest concern when recreating in the forest?;
- What is your overall satisfaction with DNR trail maintenance?
- What is you overall satisfaction with the number of people on trails and at sites?
- How well is information provided?
- Are you willing to pay a fee?

The following is a summary of the survey responses:

Greatest concern

- The greatest concern, with more than 85 percent of respondents, is **overcrowding at trailheads and congestion on trails**.
- The next greatest concerns included **conflict between users** (33 percent), **personal safety** (29 percent), followed by **access to forest maps** (27 percent).

User satisfaction

- Tahuya's trail experience meets their expectation—66 percent.
- Trails were well marked—55 percent.
- Neutral response when asked if information is well provided—44 percent.
- Too many people at sites—38 percent.
- Too many people on the trails—28 percent.

Willingness to pay a fee

- Willing to pay a fee to visit the forest—64 percent.

Demographic information

- Respondents—87 percent are male
- Age 36 to 47—49 percent
- Age 19 to 35—31 percent
- Age 50 to 64—16 percent

Priorities Outlined

The public involvement process identified several priorities:

- Address day-use facility/trail access concerns.
- Improve facilities to meet the needs of ORV recreationists.
- Improve camping facilities to guide ORV access into the forest to decrease congestion on trails and overcrowding at trailheads.

Objectives and strategies addressing these priorities are covered in Part II. The “Implementation of the Facilities Plan” in Part III also supports these priorities and is followed by an assessment of the amount of parking for each facility in the forest. Also included in Part III is a discussion of management factors for the department to improve existing ORV facilities and/or develop new ORV facilities.



Part II: Recreation Management Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

This section describes:

- DNR’s recreation vision and goals.
- Intended outcomes of the plan.
- Management direction, actions.
- Guidelines for developing facilities.

DNR Recreation and Public Access Vision Statement

Washington State Department of Natural Resources recognizes the diverse interests and values of the recreating public, and the importance of connecting people with Washington’s landscapes.

DNR’s vision statement for Recreation and Public Access is to “manage public and trust lands in a manner that provides quality, safe recreational experiences that are sustainable and consistent with DNR’s environmental, financial and social responsibilities.”

Recreation Goals

The general goals for managing recreation in the Tahuya State Forest are:

- Goal 1: Ensure recreation is consistent with trust and ecological goals.
- Goal 2: Provide for the safety of public, department employees and volunteers.
- Goal 3: Provide quality recreation experience that can be sustained over time.
- Goal 4: Pursue adequate funding and staffing for managing recreation in the forest.

The intended outcome of the plan is to decrease ORV trail congestion in and out of the facilities, reduce overcrowding at trailheads, and to better direct ORV recreation within the forest. To accomplish this, the plan:

- Addresses ORV facility access concerns by strategically locating facilities, prescribing trail management objectives and developing ORV facility capacity.
- Proposes renovating/redeveloping existing facilities to better address current uses and proposes concept designs for new day-use ORV facilities.
- Establishes a centrally located ORV campground by consolidating and redirecting existing camping in the forest.

Objectives and Strategies

The following objectives and strategies meet each of the aforementioned recreation goals:

Objective A. Address ORV day-use facility/trail access

Strategy A-1: Improve the distribution of day-use/trailhead facilities.

- Add a new trailhead facility on the east end of the forest (Sandhill).
- Convert existing facilities into day-use only (South Spillman).
- Add a new trailhead on the southern end of the forest (Four Corners).

Strategy A-2: Strengthen trail circulation into and around facilities.

- Define Trail Management Objectives for the following existing facilities (Elfendahl, Mission Creek) to strengthen trail circulation.
- Establish Trail Management Objectives for the proposed new trailhead design in order to strengthen trail circulation.

Strategy A-3: Manage ORV parking to achieve a sustainable recreation facility capacity and to reduce overcrowding

- Establish a facility parking capacity of approximately 300 parking spaces (paved).
- Monitor the capacity of facility parking to ensure the amount and type of parking is meeting its intended purpose (80 percent of capacity).

Objective B. Improve ORV facilities to meet the needs of the ORV enthusiasts

Strategy B-1: Apply design criteria for new facilities and facility renovation/redevelopment projects that include the following:

- Pave and stripe the parking area to clearly define each site's capacity.
- Provide, at a minimum, one unisex toilet.
- Provide clear trail information and trail access routes.
- Border the perimeter of the facility to define the boundary.
- Provide Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) parking and access.
- Supply and install adequate site signage.

Strategy B-2: Provide facility support for an ORV first year/first gear.

- Establish and construct new ORV first year/first gear areas adjacent to trail entrance at the following proposed facilities: Sandhill, Elfendahl Staging and Camp Elfendahl to provide safe areas for beginning riders and those wanting an area to warm up.

Objective C. Improve camping facilities

Strategy C-1: Establish a new campground that would consolidate camping into one area to accommodate current demand and improve management efficiencies

- Consolidate existing camping from two campgrounds (Camp Spillman and Kammenga) and the Elfendahl Staging Area into one large campground referred to as Camp Elfendahl.
- Design Camp Elfendahl to respond to user requests for improved camping experiences, including dump station, pull-through spaces for larger recreation vehicles and group spaces.

Strategy C-2: Formally connect proposed Camp Elfendahl and the existing day-use staging area Elfendahl Pass to respond to user requests for improved trail riding experiences while camping.

- New facility will provide a shelter, start/finish area and day use only parking with trail linking campground to the proposed Elfendahl Staging Area.

Strategy C-3: Reduce environmental impacts by consolidating camping.

- Assess existing camping locations and move away from Riparian Management Zones, if needed.
- Eliminate camping at the Elfendahl Pass Staging Area.

Objective D. Sustainable management practices

The strategies below include sustainability considerations related to managing ORV recreation facilities (existing or proposed) within the forest. These strategies are necessary for the department to manage existing facilities and develop new facilities:

Strategy D-1 Ensure the development and maintenance of each facility is:

- Consistent with DNR Policy, Rules and Regulations
 - RCW, WAC, Policy
 - HCP
 - Forest Land Planning
 - Recreation Program Standards/Guidelines
 - SEPA
 - Other applicable _____
- Supported by Tahuya Focus Group members

Strategy D-2: Identify a reliable funding source for enforcement- and education-related services.

- Work to establish funding for enforcement officers and wardens. Both are essential to providing recreation in the forest.

- Recruit Forest Watch members and facility hosts, who provide the forest with an additional presence.

Strategy D-3: Determine DNR's ability to manage and maintain facilities over time, specific to the following items:

- Ability over time to obtain maintenance dollars.
- Availability and cost of labor crews (i.e. WCC, camps, fire).
- Commitment by volunteer group (i.e. labor contribution).
- Establish or lengthen lease/easements as required.

Strategy D-4: Evaluate site suitability to assess compatibility with land, management requirements, and existing recreation use patterns.

Objective E. Trail System Planning

The first step to a successful trail system is to create an inventory of designated routes by carefully considering numerous variables and planning elements.

Strategy E-1: Complete route inventory and outline designated motorized routes.

- Evaluate design criteria for trails, such as loop trails, destination trails, include allotting enough distance and technicality to provide hours of riding time. For most trail riders the hours spent are more important than total mileage.
- Provide a wide range of experiences and degree of difficulty for managers to incorporate future efforts. Beginner loops are planned with very specific access, signage and user expectations.

Objective F. Promote ORV User Safety

Safety is an important component of any ORV recreation facility, with the goal of reducing potential accidents and injuries to ORV riders at facilities and on forest roads and trails. Rider education instructs riders on safe riding techniques, environmental awareness and encourages them to "tread lightly," as well as outlines the rules that are in place to protect the natural resources.

Strategy F-1 Make recreation information and facilities visible and readily available.

- Distribute brochures and maps or make available online.
- Post rules, safe riding and tread lightly information or make available online.
- Install signs on the trails, at facilities and at forest entrances.
- Locate facilities adjacent to major roads to increase visibility of staff.
- Provide first year/first gear areas (beginner/warm up areas).

Objective G. DNR/Public Partnerships and Volunteer Coordination

Maintain current and develop new cooperative efforts with the public, other agencies, user groups and department volunteers.

Strategy G-1: Promote better coordination with other agencies to ensure:

- Effective land management.
- Cooperative law enforcement.
- Coordinated planning and use of resources for public access and recreation.

Strategy G-2: Further develop volunteer program.

- Educate volunteers on how to meet DNR design, construction and maintenance standards.
- Further develop and enhance the volunteer campground host program.
- Continue to perform and enhance the volunteer Forest Watch program.

Objective H. Role of Education and Enforcement Education and enforcement play an important role in the forest to increase user safety and protect resources by enforcing forest rules, and educating the recreating public of the forest rules:

Strategy H-1: Further develop the education and enforcement program.

- Continue to seek long-term stable funding for the Education and Enforcement (E&E) program, which works to educate recreation visitors and enforce the rules.
- Ensure field staff attends law enforcement training.
- Develop and install appropriate signage to guide recreational use, behaviors and safety.
- Provide rules online.
- Continue developing a strong DNR partnership with Mason County Sheriff's Department.
- Promote and expand the Forest Watch volunteer program.
- Patrol for garbage, vandalism and other illegal activities.
- Work to ensure that visitors adhere to current noise laws, per WAC 173-60-040.

Objective I. Explore Future Commercial Opportunities

Explore whether or not ORV commercial recreation can cover costs or generate revenue for the trust beneficiaries.

Strategy I-1 Perform a feasibility assessment

- Assess concession/commercial recreation leasing options with the Tahuya Focus Group's input to ensure long-term forest health and overall recreation value to all.
- Explore other recreation opportunities.

Objective J. Continue to refine a procedure for managing organized events

This objective was developed to best balance the demand for events by differing types of recreation clubs or organizations.

Strategy J-1 Establish an interim motorized and non-motorized event scheduling protocol.

- Scheduling for events of the following year to occur at Nov/Dec Tahuya Focus Group meeting.
- Motorized event season is from April 1st through Nov 15th. (non-motorized).
- Allow no more than two motorized events per month.
- Allow no motorized events on holiday weekends.
- Allow no motorized events on two consecutive weekends.
- Prohibit two-day events.
- Failure to comply with any organized event requirements or permit conditions may result in the revocation the event.
- Each club sponsor must complete volunteer hours prior to November scheduling for upcoming season events.
- When the motorized event dates are determined, they are non-negotiable between the club sponsor and DNR. However, sponsors may trade dates among themselves with the approval of DNR.
- Event participation does not exceed 400 riders.

Objective K. Inform forest visitors using a variety of communication methods

Strategy K-1: Continue to provide a variety of communication/outreach tools.

- Improve clear communication regarding DNR regulations, policies and management practices of the department.
- Provide information on signs that is visible and easily understood by visitors to the forest.
- Provide maps and trail/side closure information on DNR's website.
- Provide information boards that describe how sustainable forestry practices coexist with recreation access and the preservation of cultural values (trust heritage).



Part III: ORV Facilities Overview and Plan Implementation (10 years)

The following describes the existing facilities and areas where undesignated recreation use occurs:

Existing ORV Facilities

Howell Lake

Present condition: Howell Lake is located south of the Belfair Tahuya Road and is adjacent to Howell Lake Trail. The facility primarily attracts the following recreation activities: fishing, swimming and picnicking. DNR's forested road provides multiple access points to the lake by extending around about half of the lake. The facility has a boat ramp, new toilet, and a picnic area. Currently, no defined parking area exists.

Plan Action: Address parking issues.

Mission Creek Trailhead

Present Condition: This trailhead is located close to Belfair State Park and functions as an information center for first-time forest recreation visitors. It is the first trailhead when entering the forest from North Shore/Belfair Tahuya Road. The facility's entrance off of Belfair Tahuya Road is located on a vertical curve, resulting in limited visibility.

This trailhead has approximately 30 parking spaces for vehicles or 15 spaces for vehicles with trailers. The parking area has a dirt surface, an information board and a "you are here" map. There are no restroom facilities. A log barrier was recently installed to prohibit undesignated trail use.

Plan Action: Address visibility issue when determining location of proposed site.

Elfendahl Pass Staging Area

Present condition: This facility is generally full year-round. Full capacity in the lower and upper lot is about 40 to 50 vehicles. The facility has restroom facilities and a shelter with an information board. Multiple trails allow access to this facility. Many of these trails have no signage and function as informal play areas. Specifically, four trails intersect at this area.

Overnight use occurs in the parking area. The overnight use at this site is considered informal as it occurs without the typical DNR campsite amenities such as a fire ring, vehicle parking space and a picnic table. The parking area has an estimated capacity of 28 vehicles with trailers. The parking area surface is in bad shape and needs to be repaved. Postponing repaving may require extensive work in the future.

Plan Action: Add campground and renovate/redevelop trailhead staging access.

Camp Spillman

Present condition: This is a DNR-designated campground with a lease and past funding from the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO), formally known as the Interagency for Outdoor Recreation (IAC). Generally this site is used by RVs; most are ORV trail riders. In the summer, an occasional tent camper can be found in the mix. This facility borders the Tahuya River causing concern for habitat.

The facility has 10 camping sites and is regularly filled on the weekends. The campground has an amphitheater, a new restroom facility, information board and “you are here” map. The camp sites each have a fire ring, parking space and picnic area. If existing use patterns continue, Campsite #1 will meld into Campsite #10 to become a large dirt parking lot. The site has a broken well needing repairs and a functioning water line from Oak Patch.

Plan Action: Convert to day-use facility. Transfer overnight camping to Camp Elfendahl.

Kammenga Canyon Campground

Present condition: This facility is located off of Goat Ranch Forest Road, which is located off of the Elfendahl Pass County Road. It is the northernmost access point in the forest. The campground has few barriers around its borders, resulting in vehicles parking and unloading where there is space.

There are six campsites, each with a fire ring, parking space and picnic table. This campground has a water line out of Oak Patch and a new restroom facility. Also, there is an information board and “you are here” map.

Plan Action: Convert to day-use facility. Transfer overnight camping to Camp Elfendahl.

Undesignated Recreation

Sandhill Gravel Pit

Present Condition: Sandhill is an undesignated unloading and play area located in a gravel pit. It is the second most popular area to park in the forest and a destination for people who want to play around in the pit or access trails from the eastern half of the forest. Many visitors

will play in the pit all day and never use the trails. People illegally ride to the pit from a housing development located a few miles away.

At first glance, Sandhill appears to be a formal trailhead with a large “you are here” map and an information board. The site has no other recreation amenities. Overnight use is becoming a concern at the gravel pit. The recent installation of eco-block bordering the road, has aided in keeping the gravel in the pit and off of the county road. The location of the entrance is cause for concern as it is on the curve of Sandhill Road. Riders often come out of the pit at high speeds and continue through the parking area to exit. Many visitors are concerned with safety and damage to their vehicles from rocks flinging from speeding vehicles.

Plan Action: Develop an official east side trailhead.

Camp Pond

Present condition: Camp Pond area is the proposed location for Elfendahl Campground. It is located a half mile northeast of the proposed site. This site is located about 1,000 yards to the north of Elfendahl Staging Area. It is used as an official trailhead.

Plan Action: Develop this area into Camp Elfendahl.

Four Corners Area

Present condition: Four corners area is located near the intersection of Elfendahl Pass County Road and the Belfair-Tahuya County Road. It is currently used as an official trailhead and is a wide pull-out along the side of the road.

Plan Action: Develop an official south side trailhead.

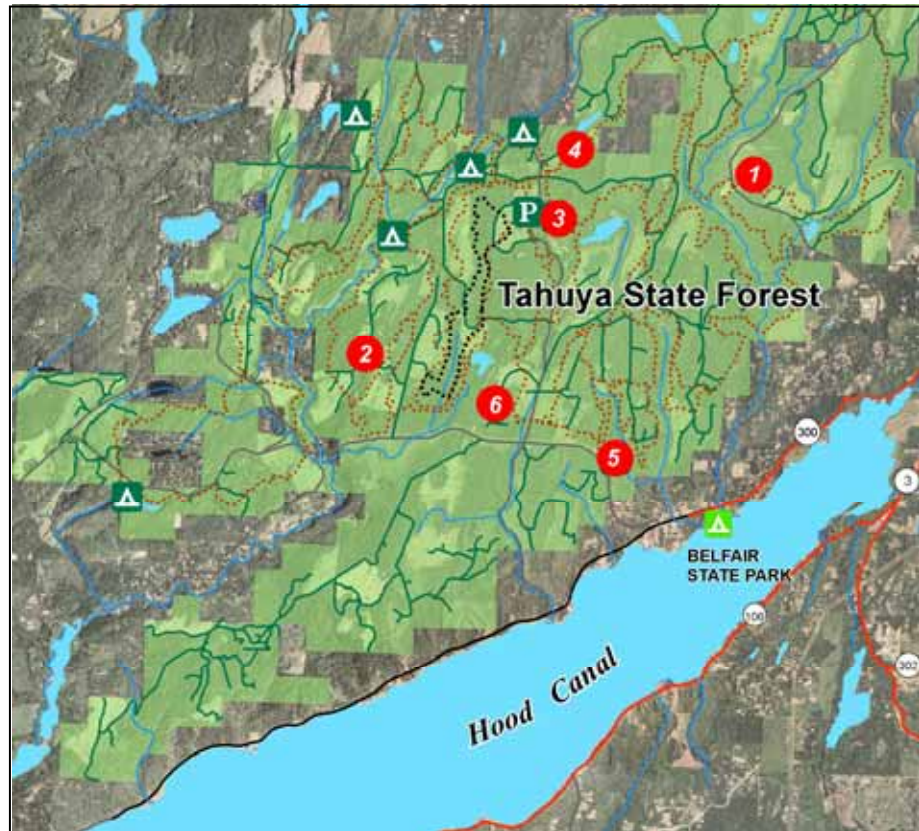
Action List in Order of Priority

DNR worked with the Tahuya Planning Working Group to develop a list for proposed new development, existing site renovation or redevelopment concept designs. Below is the list of projects in order of priority:

1. Sandhill Trailhead (Proposed)
2. South Spillman Trailhead (Proposed)
3. Elfendahl Staging Area (Existing)
4. Camp Elfendahl (Proposed)
5. Mission Creek Trailhead (Existing)
6. Four Corners Trailhead (Proposed)

Figure 4. Location of proposed action areas by priority.

1. Sandhill Trailhead (proposed new site)
2. South Spillman Trailhead (proposed new site)
3. Elfendahl Staging Area (Proposed expansion of existing facility)
4. Camp Elfendahl (proposed new campground)
5. Mission Creek Trailhead (proposed expansion of existing facility)
6. Four Corners Trailhead (proposed new site)



January 2009

Disclaimer:

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this map. However, due to changes in ownership and agency modification of data layers, plus the need to rely on data from outside the agency, the Department of Natural Resources cannot accept responsibility for errors or omissions. Therefore, there are no warranties which accompany this material.



WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF
Natural Resources
Peter Goldmark - Commissioner of Public Lands



0 0.5 1 2 Miles

Funding Priorities

PRIORITY 1. Sandhill Trailhead

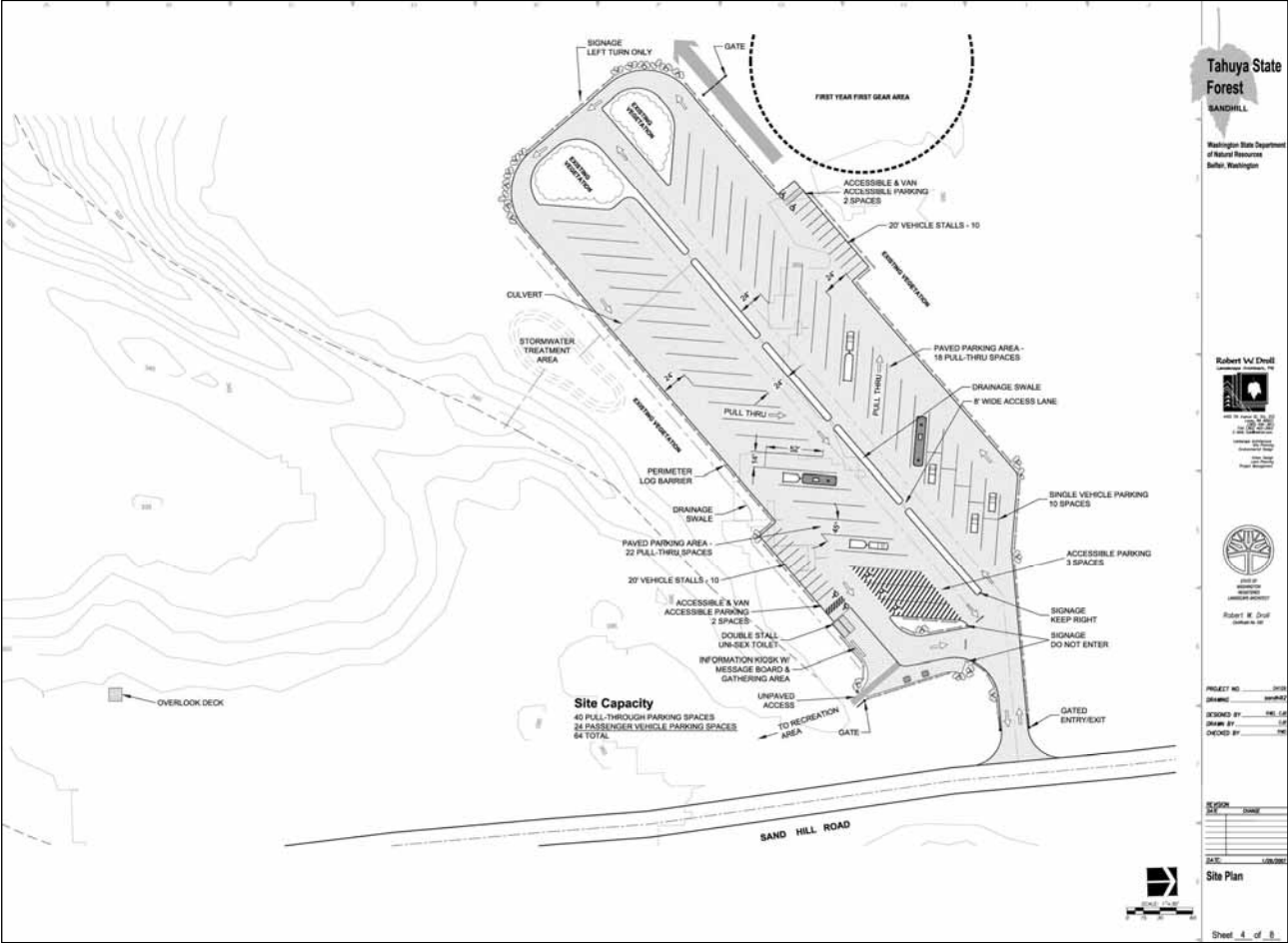
The proposed Sandhill Trailhead will become a designated area, relocating ORV riders who use Sandhill Gravel Pit as a parking area and play area to a facility specifically designed for ORV recreation. The concept design (Figure 5, following page) is located 1/8 mile north of the Sandhill Gravel Pit, along Sand Hill County Road. This concept design calls for 64 parking spaces: 40 pull-through parking spaces and 24 passenger vehicle parking spaces. This trailhead is designed to address the following issues:

- Create a designated day use area on the eastside of the forest.
- Redirects a majority of the use occurring at the gravel pit.
- Meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.

Specifically, the proposed concept design has the following facility details:

- Located along a straight stretch of county road, which will provide increased sight distance for visitors.
- The trailhead will have the following amenities at the entrance: a toilet, ADA parking and an information kiosk that directs riders to the trail .
- Designed as a day use only site, the trailhead will have a gate at the entry/exit point and will be closed at night to help alleviate night time use.
- Provides two trail entrance gates to the trail system and the gravel pit.
- Provides a first year/first gear loop for the novice rider.
- Paved parking spaces to clearly direct visitors where parking is allowed to control capacity.
- Establishes a permanent border around the facility to identify areas that are off-limit to ORV riding.

Figure 5. Sandhill Trailhead (proposed new development)



PRIORITY 2: South Spillman Trailhead

The proposed South Spillman Trailhead is a designated area designed to provide access to the southern portion of the 4x4 trail system and other ORV trail segments. Currently, the 4x4 trail system has very limited access points. The concept design (Figure 6, following page) is located off the South Spillman Forest Road. This site design has a total of 60 parking spaces: 40 pull-through parking spaces and 20 passenger-vehicle parking spaces.

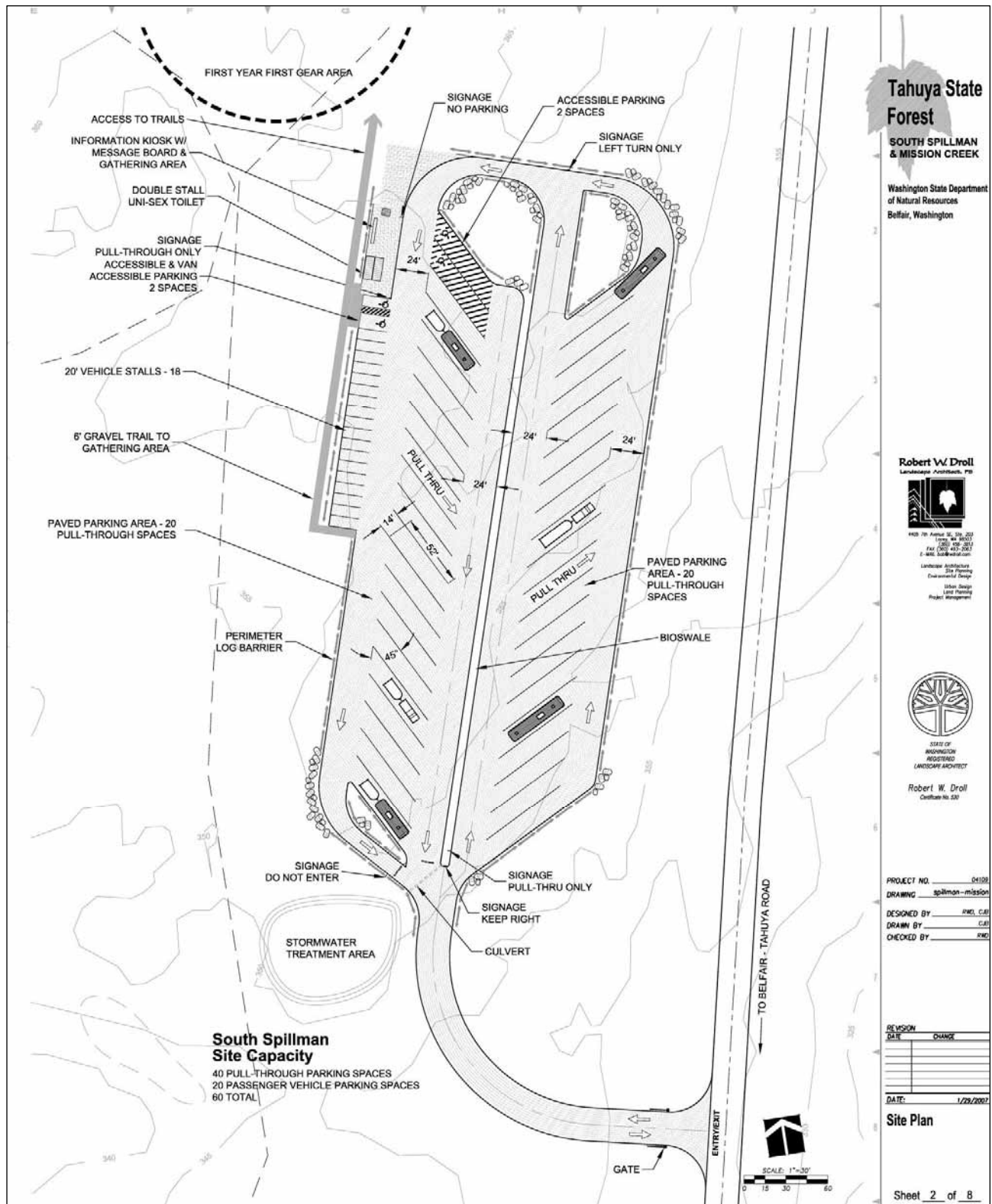
This trailhead is designed to address the following issues:

- Create a designated day-use area on the southern part of the 4x4 trail system.
- Redirect 4x4 access away from Elfendahl Staging Area, which is designed for short-wheel based vehicles.
- Meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements

Specifically, the proposed concept design has the following facility details:

- Designed for 4x4 trail riders or vehicles with a larger wheel base.
- The trailhead will have the following amenities at the back of the site: a toilet, ADA parking and an information kiosk that directs riders to the trail.
- Designed as a day-use-only site, the trailhead will have a gate at the entry/exit point and will be closed at night to help alleviate night time use.
- Provides a trail entrance with a gate to the trail system.
- Paved and lined parking spaces to clearly direct visitors where parking is allowed to control capacity.
- Establishes a permanent border around the facility to identify areas that are off limits to ORV riding.

Figure 6. South Spillman Trailhead (proposed new development)



PRIORITY 3: Elfendahl Staging Area

Elfendahl Staging Area will be located in the original footprint of the existing area. The concept design (Figure 7, following page) is located on the Elfendahl Pass County Road. This site design has 49 pull-through parking spaces.

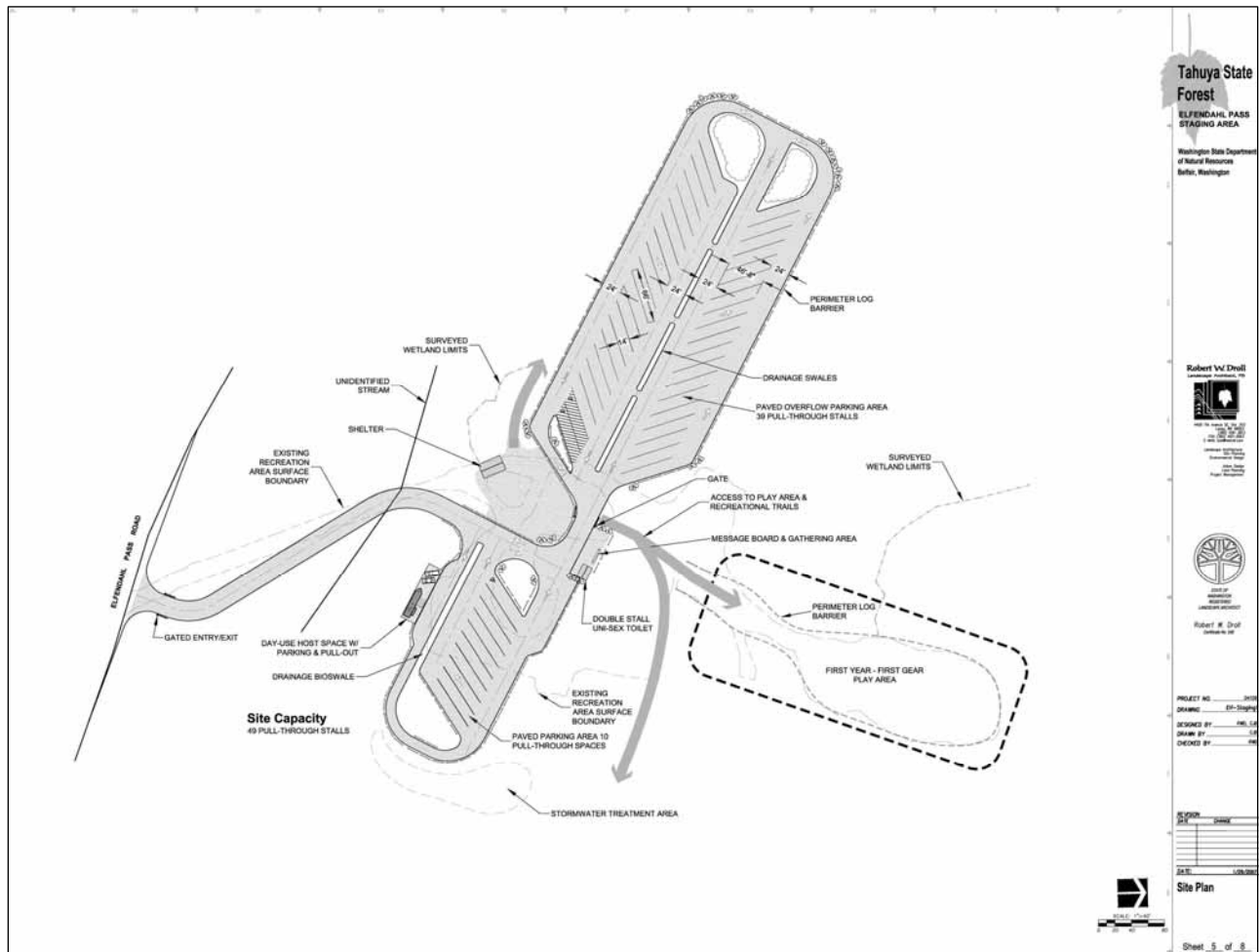
The staging area is designed to address the following issues:

- Upgrade the current designated day use area.
- Eliminate overnight camping at Elfendahl Staging Area.
- Meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.

Specifically, the proposed concept design has the following facility details:

- Located off a major road to improve the response time for law enforcement officers.
- The trailhead will have the following amenities at the front of the site: a toilet, ADA parking and an information kiosk that directs riders to the trail.
- Designed as a day-use-only site, the trailhead will have a gate at the entry/exit point and will be closed at night to help alleviate night time use.
- Provides overflow parking and an event area made accessible during organized events.
- Provides an area for an information kiosk at the entrance that directs riders to the trail system.
- Paved parking and lined parking spaces to clearly direct visitors where parking is allowed to control capacity.
- Establishes a permanent border around the facility to identify areas that are off limits to ORV riding.

Figure 7. Elfendahl Staging Area (existing site renovate/redevelop)



PRIORITY 4: Camp Elfendahl

Camp Elfendahl is a large-scale camping facility that will provide centralized camping within the Tahuya State Forest. The concept design (Figure 8, following page.) is located on Elfendahl Pass County Road, one-half mile north of the existing Elfendahl Staging Area. This concept design includes a total of 50 day-use parking spaces and 48 camping sites, plus two host sites.

This campground is designed to address the following issues:

- Consolidate forest camping at one location from several smaller campgrounds.
- Redirect camping that is occurring at the staging area while establishing the staging areas as day use only.
- Meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.

Specifically, the proposed concept design has the following facility details:

- Located off a major road so as to improve the response time for law enforcement officers and increase the visibility for DNR staff who drive by to patrol the campground.
- Designed to have one entry/exit point which has a host campsite stationed at the entrance.
- Provides an area for an information kiosk at the entrance that directs campers to campsites and the trail system. The entry/exit point and trail entrance have gates to give the department the ability to ration use.
- Paved parking and campsites and clear directions where parking/camping is allowed, with parking strips and numbered campsites to control capacity.
- Provides day-use parking for overflow parking during large events.
- Establishes a permanent border around the facility to identify areas that are off-limit to ORV riding.
- Designed to allow for additional campsites.

Site Capacity - Phase 1

CAMPGROUND:	
BACK-IN SPACES	30
PULL-THROUGH SPACES	9
PULL-IN SPACES	9
TOTAL	48

DAY USE AREA:	
PULL-THROUGH SPACES	27
PULL-IN SPACES	23
TOTAL	50

Site Plan

Sheet 6 of 8

PRIORITY 5: Mission Creek Trailhead

Mission Creek Trailhead will be relocated to adjust for the visibility limitations. The concept design (Figure 9, following page) is located on the Belfair Tahuya Road. Many people use this site as the gateway to the forest, often stopping first at Mission Creek when entering the forest. There are 35 passenger vehicle parking spaces at this site.

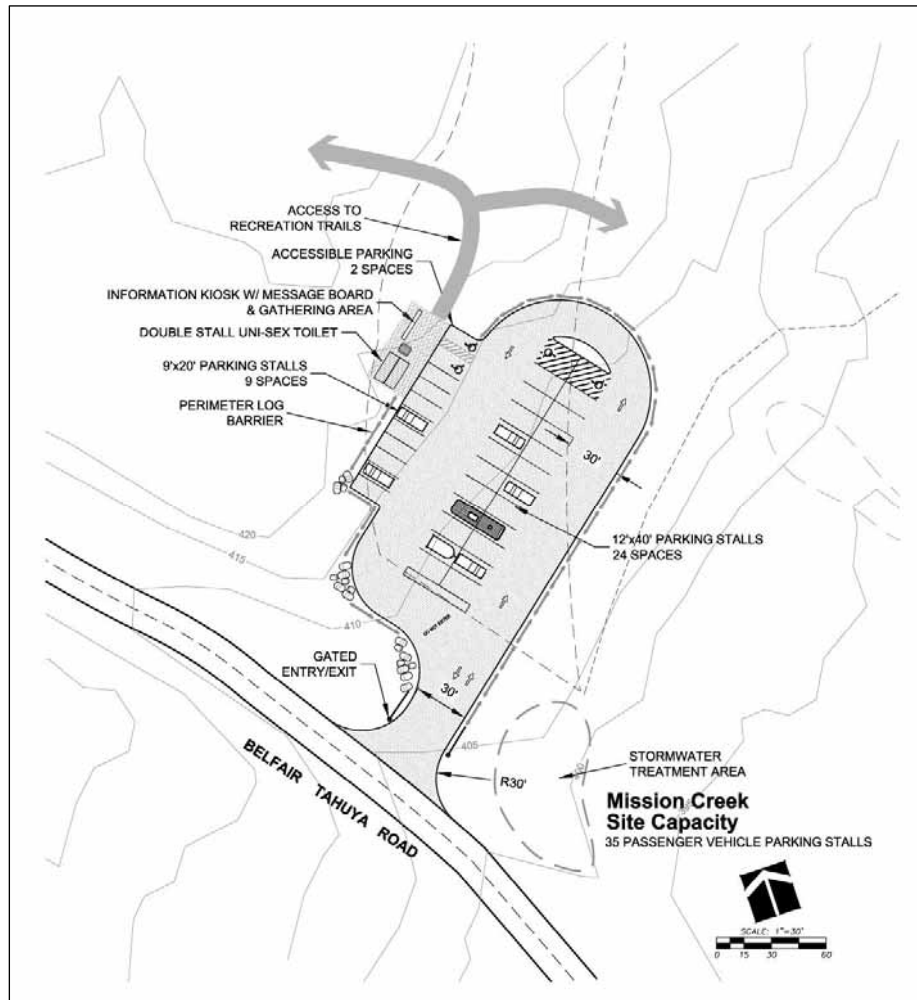
This trailhead is designed to address the following issues:

- Upgrade the current designated day use area.
- Provide a loading and parking area near Belfair State Park.
- Meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.

Specifically, the proposed concept design has the following facility details:

- Relocated entrance so as to improve the visibility.
- The trailhead will have the following amenities at the back of the site: a toilet, ADA parking and an information kiosk that directs riders to the trail.
- Designed as a day-use-only site, the trailhead will have a gate at the entry/exit point and will be closed at night to help alleviate night time use.
- Provides a trail entrance with a gate to the trail system.
- Paved and lined parking spaces to clearly direct visitors where parking is allowed to control capacity.
- Establishes a permanent border around the facility to identify areas that are off limits to ORV riding.

Figure 9. Mission Creek Trailhead (relocate site to address visibility)



PRIORITY 6: Four Corners Trailhead

Four Corners Trailhead is a proposed designated area, designed to provide access to the southern portion of the ORV trail system. The concept design (Figure 10, following page) is located on the Elfendahl Pass Road, just off of the Belfair Tahuya Road. This site design has 30 pull-through parking spaces.

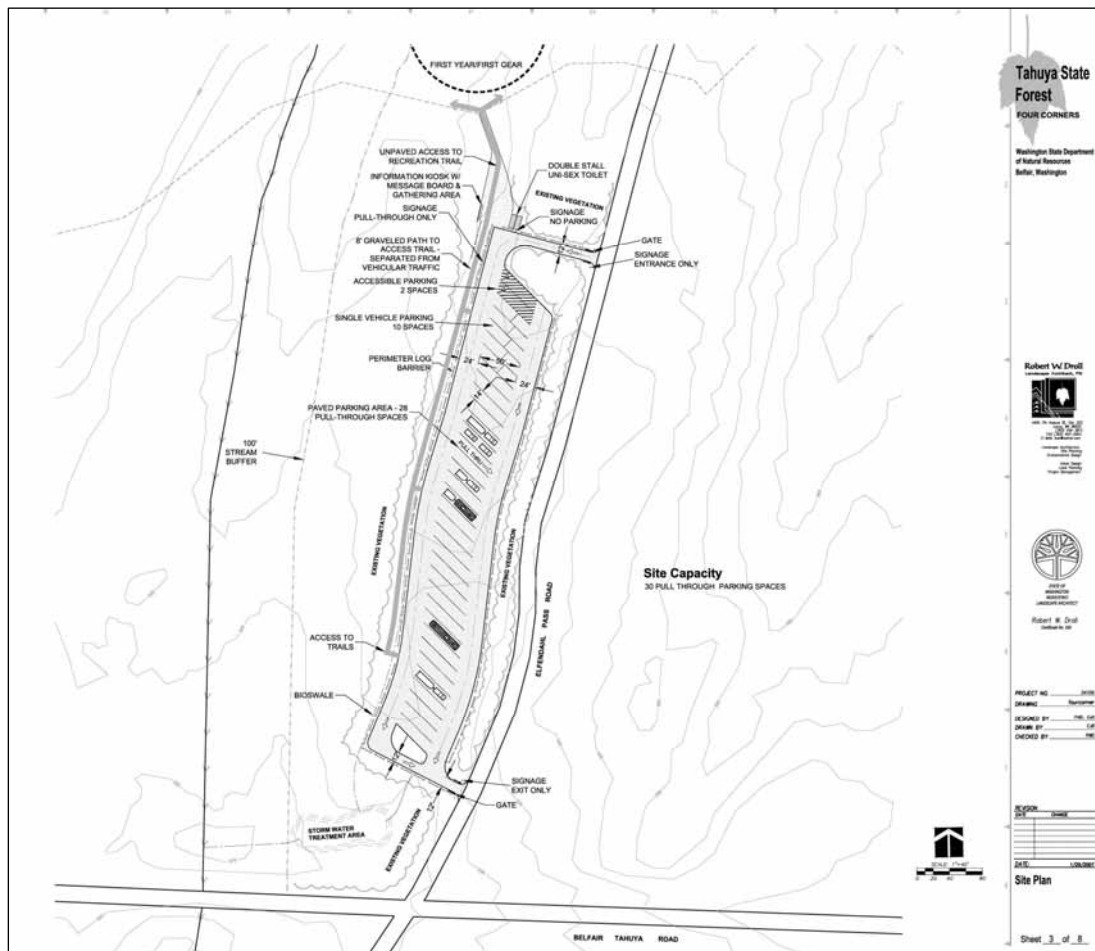
This trailhead is designed to address the following issues:

- Create a designated day use area on the southern part of the ORV trail system.
- Redirect ORV access away from Elfendahl Staging Area, Mission Creek and other trailheads.
- Meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.

Specifically, the proposed concept design has the following facility details:

- Located off a major county road so as to improve the response time for law enforcement officers and increase the visibility for DNR staff who drive by.
- Designed as a day-use-only site, the trailhead will have a gate at the entry/exit point and will be closed at night to help alleviate night time use.
- Provides a trail entrance with a gate to the trail system.
- The trailhead will have the following amenities at the back of the site: a toilet, ADA parking and an information kiosk that directs riders to the trail.
- Paved and lined parking spaces to clearly direct visitors where parking is allowed to control capacity.
- Establishes a permanent border around the facility to identify areas that are off limits to ORV riding.

Figure 10. Four Corners Trailhead (proposed new development)



Implementation of Plan (10 years)

A summary of the projects to be pursued follows in tables, year-by-year.

Summary of Funding Priorities (Grant and Capital):

Application Year	Area	Implementation Year
2007	Sandhill Trailhead Planning/Acquisition	2008-09
2008	Sandhill Trailhead Development	2009-10
2009	Trail System Planning	2010-12
2010	Sandhill Trailhead Development (Phase 2)	2011-13
2011	Trail Development	2012-13
2013	South Spillman Planning/Acquisition	2014
2014	South Spillman Trailhead Development	2015-16
2015	Elfendahl Planning/Acquisition	2016
2016	Elfendahl Development	2017-18
2017	Tahuya State Forest (TSF) ORV Recreation Plan	2018-2020

The following tables list projects and probable funding by year. All depend on funding and timing and could be diminished or accelerated depending on funding:

Table 3. Implementation Timeline 2007 (*in progress*)

Project	Description	Probable Funding
Education & Enforcement (E&E)	request E&E program	grant with match
Planning/Acquisition of: Sandhill Trailhead	to accommodate approximately 64 vehicles	grant with match
Maintenance & Operation (M&O)	request M&O funding	crew labor and materials supplemented by existing materials with supervision out of DNR funds
Trail Bridge Development Grant	request funding for the installation of trails bridge	grant with match

Table 4. Implementation Timeline 2008

Project	Description	Probable Funding
Education & Enforcement (E&E)	continue E&E program	grant with match
Development of: Sandhill Trailhead	request development funding	grant to hire contractor with supervision by DNR staff
Maintenance & Operation (M&O)	continue M&O funding	crew labor and materials supplemented by existing materials with supervision out of DNR funds

Table 5. Implementation Timeline 2009

Project	Description	Probable Funding
Education & Enforcement (E&E)	request E&E program	grant with match
Planning of: Trail Inventory & Assessment	request funding for Trails System Planning	grant with match
Maintenance & Operation (M&O)	request M&O funding	crew labor and materials supplemented by existing materials with supervision out of DNR funds

Table 6. Implementation timeline 2010

Project	Description	Probable Funding
Education & Enforcement (E&E)	continue E&E program	grant with match
Development of Sandhill	continue to build Sandhill Trailhead	grant with supervision by DNR staff
Maintenance & Operation (M&O)	continue M&O funding	crew labor and materials supplemented by existing materials with supervision out of DNR funds
Trails System Planning	continue trail inventory and assessment	crew labor and materials supplemented by existing materials with supervision out of DNR funds

Table 7. Implementation Timeline 2011

Project	Description	Probable Funding
Education & Enforcement (E&E)	request E&E program	grant with match
Development of: 1. Trail #1 2. Trail #2	develop trails proposed in Trail System Planning effort	grant with match
Maintenance & Operation (M&O)	request M&O funding	crew labor and materials supplemented by existing materials with supervision out of DNR funds
Trail reroutes	changes in trails related to Trail System Planning findings	crew labor and materials supplemented by existing materials with supervision out of DNR funds

Table 8. Implementation Timeline 2012

Project	Description	Probable Funding
Education & Enforcement (E&E)	continue E&E program	grant with match
Development of: 1. Trail #1 2. Trail #2	continue trail development grant	grant with match
Maintenance & Operation (M&O)	continue M&O funding	crew labor and materials supplemented by existing materials with supervision out of DNR funds

Table 9. Implementation Timeline 2013

Project	Description	Probable Funding
Education & Enforcement (E&E)	request E&E program	grant with match
Acquisition/ Development of: South Spillman	to accommodate approximately 60 vehicles	grant with match
Maintenance & Operation (M&O)	request M&O funding	crew labor and materials supplemented by existing materials with supervision out of DNR funds
Trail Reroute/ Development	Trails System Planning results	crew labor and materials supplemented by existing materials with supervision out of DNR funds

Table 10. Implementation Timeline 2014

Project	Description	Probable Funding
Education & Enforcement (E&E)	continue E&E program	grant with match
Development of South Spillman	construct South Spillman Trailhead	grant with match
Maintenance & Operation (M&O)	continue M&O funding	crew labor and materials supplemented by existing materials with supervision out of DNR funds
Trail System Monitoring	continue to implement Trails System Planning results	crew labor and materials supplemented by existing materials with supervision out of DNR funds

Table 11. Implementation Timeline 2015

Project	Description	Probable Funding
Education & Enforcement (E&E)	request E&E program	grant with match
Planning/Acquisition of: 1. Elfendahl camp 2. Elfendahl staging	to accommodate approximately 50 camping and 99 day use vehicles	grant with match
Maintenance & Operation (M&O)	request M&O funding	crew labor and materials supplemented by existing materials with supervision out of DNR funds
Trail Reroute/Development (to be determined)	implementation of the Trails System Plan	crew labor and materials supplemented by existing materials with supervision out of DNR funds
Development of: South Spillman	continue to build South Spillman Trailhead	grant with match

Table 12. Implementation timeline 2016

Project	Description	Probable Funding
Education & Enforcement (E&E)	continue E&E program	grant with match
Development of: 1. Elf. Camp 2. Elf. Staging	construct Elfendahl campground and staging area	grant with match
Maintenance & Operation (M&O)	continue M&O funding	crew labor and materials supplemented by existing materials with supervision out of DNR funds
Trail Development	Trails System Planning results	crew labor and materials supplemented by existing materials with supervision out of DNR funds

Table 13. Implementation Timeline 2017

Project	Description	Probable Funding
Education & Enforcement (E&E)	request E&E program	grant with match
Planning of TSF 1. Facilities 2. Trails	request planning grant	grant with match
Maintenance & Operation (M&O)	request M&O funding	crew labor and materials supplemented by existing materials with supervision out of DNR funds
Trail Reroute/ Development of: (to be determined)	Trails System Planning results	crew labor and materials supplemented by existing materials with supervision out of DNR funds
Development of: 1. Elf. Camp 2. Elf. Staging	continue to construct Elfendahl campground and staging area	grant with match



Appendices

Appendix A: Non-motorized and other recreation uses

Tahuya River Horse Camp

Present Condition: This facility is located off of South Spillman Road on the Tahuya River. This site has 10 camping sites, which are by reservation only. Each year, two to three non-motorized (horseback riding and mountain bike riding) organized events are staged out of this facility. In general, camping by motorized use has slowly displaced traditional hiking, equestrian riding/camping and other non-motorized use in the area.

The facility has a designated American with Disabilities Act (ADA) campsite and ADA horse ramp, a hitching post and large corral that can hold multiple horses, a new restroom facility, an information board, and a “you are here” map. It is located in the channel migration zone of the Tahuya River and considered part of the shoreline for the state. The Hood Canal Salmon Enhancement Group assisted with bank stabilization to diminish the effects of river migration.

Twin Lakes Campground

This is the only non-motorized facility in the forest, with six (walk-in) campsites, each with a picnic table and fire ring. Additionally, one site is drive-in. Twin Lake has fishing access.

Dispersed Uses:

Fishing

- Oak Patch Lake is an undesignated recreation site, located adjacent to Oak Patch Natural Area Preserve. This facility has a boat ramp and parking for one vehicle.
- Designated fishing areas include: Howell Lake and Twin Lakes.

Hunting

- This type of recreation use occurs across the landscape.
- The pheasant hunting release site was relocated from Tahuya to Sherwood Forest in 2006. The department coordinates the management of this site with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Peninsula Bird Hunters Association.

Natural Area Preserve

Oak Patch Natural Area Preserve (NAP) is located on Goat Ranch Road, in close proximity to Kammenga Canyon Campground and Camp Spillman. This area is used for scientific purposes only and fenced off to the general public.

Appendix B: Guidelines for Carrying Capacity

Carrying capacity, as it applies to recreation, is the type and level of visitor use that can be accommodated while sustaining the desired resources and social conditions. (Paraphrased from The Visitor Experience and Resource Protection (VERP) Framework, A Handbook for Planners and Managers, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Parks Services, page 96.)

The Tahuya State Forest ORV Recreation Facilities Plan addresses use levels by determining a carrying capacity of 80 percent with a target of 300 (approximate) parking spaces.

Interim Carry Capacity Background

Steve Uheles, ORV consultant, recommended six riders per trail mile. Taking the 170 miles of trail times 6 riders per trail mile equals 1,160 trail riders in the forest = 100 percent

Assuming four riders travel in a vehicle: (1,160 divided by 4)	290 parking spaces
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Assuming three riders travel in a vehicle: (1,160 divided by 3)	386 parking spaces
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Assuming two riders travel in a vehicle: (1,160 divided by 2)	580 parking spaces
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At 80 percent of capacity, there would be 928 trail riders in the forest.

Assuming four riders travel in a vehicle: (928 divided by 4)	232 parking spaces
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Assuming three riders travel in a vehicle: (928 divided by 3)	309 parking spaces
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Assuming two riders travel in a vehicle: (928 divided by 2)	464 parking spaces
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At 50 percent of capacity, there would be 580 trail riders in the forest.

Assuming four riders travel in a vehicle: (580 divided by 4)	145 parking spaces
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Assuming three riders travel in a vehicle: (580 divided by 3)	193 parking spaces
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Assuming two riders travel in a vehicle: (580 divided by 2)	290 parking spaces
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Proposed Facility	Camping sites	Day Use parking spaces
Sandhill Trailhead		64
South Spillman Trailhead		60
Camp Elfendahl	48 + 2 hosts	50
Elfendahl Pass Staging Area	1 host/manager	49
Mission Creek Trailhead		35
Four Corner Trailhead		30
Total	48 + 3 hosts	288

Appendix C

Consolidated Campground

Today's ORV camping is grouped in the southern part of the forest. The existing camping in the forest includes:

- Kammenga Canyon: 6 campsites
- Twin Lake Camp: 6 campsites that are walk-in only
- Camp Spillman: 10 campsites
- Elfendahl Pass: Informal overnight use (approx. 28)

This plan directs the relocation of existing camp sites to the proposed Camp Elfendahl. There are a total of 22 campsites from Kammenga, Twin Lake Camp and Camp Spillman, to be consolidated to Camp Elfendahl, a new 50 site campground. Additionally, the approximate 28 informal camping sites at Elfendahl Pass will be transferred to Camp Elfendahl. There is no change in the amount of ORV camping sites. The total number of existing camping sites is approximately 50 (22 existing plus 28 informal camping at the staging area).

The Tahuya River Horse Camp (10 campsites) will continue to be managed under a reservation system and be used for staging non-motorized events.